



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

JUN 27 2012

Dear Requester,

RE: William McGonagle

This is in response to your request dated 4/30/12. We have assigned Case Control Number F-2012-27031 to your request.

Based on our review of your correspondence, we have determined that we cannot process your request for the following reason(s):

- ☐ You have not reasonably described the records you seek in a way that someone familiar with Department records and programs could locate them.
- ☐ You have not provided a valid third party authorization; or proof of death; or custodial verification of a minor.
- ☐ You have not provided identifying information (such as your date and/or place of birth, or the date and/or place of birth for all persons named in your request; citizenship status).
- ☒ You have not provided proof of your identity (personal verification).
- ☒ Some or all of the records you have requested do not appear to be State Department records (other agency information may be attached).
- ☐ The records you seek are in the public domain.
- ☐ Your request is not dated.
- ☐ You have submitted your identifying information on forms that were not issued by the State Department, which we do not accept.
- ☐ You have not agreed to pay the fees associated with the processing of your request.
- ☐ Your request is not a FOIA Request.
- ☐ Your request was not submitted in English.

Accordingly, your request is invalid and your case has been closed.

Should you want to contact us, you may call our FOIA Requester Service Center on (202) 261-8484 or send an email to FOIAstatus@state.gov. If you want information concerning how to file a request, please refer to the Information Access Guide which is available at [www.foia.state.gov](http://www.foia.state.gov). Please refer to the Case Control Number in any communication.

Sincerely,

 Mary Therese Casto  
Chief, Requester Communications Branch

Office of Information Programs and Services  
U.S. Department of State, SA-2  
Washington, DC 20522-8100  
Website: [www.foia.state.gov](http://www.foia.state.gov)

Inquiries:  
Phone: 1-202-261-8484  
FAX: 1-202-261-8579  
E-mail: [FOIAStatus@state.gov](mailto:FOIAStatus@state.gov)

Some or all of the records you seek may no longer be in the possession of the State Department. The majority of Department of State records (excluding passport and visa records) that are 25 years or older and considered to be permanent are transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in accordance with Title 22, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 171.6. Accordingly, requests for such records should be addressed to:

FOIA Officer  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road, Room 3110  
College Park, MD 20740  
Telephone: (301) 837-FOIA (3642)  
FAX: (301) 837-0293  
E-mail: [foia@nara.gov](mailto:foia@nara.gov)  
<http://www.archives.gov/foia/index.html>

Some or all of the records you seek appear to have been originated by another agency. If you wish to contact the Freedom of Information Act/Privacy Act Office of that agency, the address and contact information follows:

**Department of Defense – Navy**

Robin Patterson

Chief of Naval Operations (DNS-36)

2000 Navy Pentagon

Washington, DC 20350-2000

telephone: (202) 685-6545

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e-mail: [robin.patterson@navy.mil](mailto:robin.patterson@navy.mil)

# William McGonagle

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**William Loren McGonagle** (November 19, 1925 – March 3, 1999) was a United States Naval officer who received the Medal of Honor for his actions while in command of the USS *Liberty* when it was attacked in the Eastern Mediterranean on June 8, 1967 during the Six-Day War.

After accepting a commission in the US Navy in 1944 McGonagle held various assignments before taking command of the *Liberty* in 1966. In June 1967 the *Liberty* was sailing in international waters in the Eastern Mediterranean when it was attacked by the Israel Defense Force, injuring McGonagle, killing and injuring other members of his crew, and severely damaging the ship. He maintained control of the ship until help arrived, and after healing from his wounds was presented the Medal of Honor for his actions on the *Liberty* in 1968. He continued his navy career, holding several more positions until retiring in 1974. When he died in 1999 he was buried at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors a short distance from the graves of some of his crew who were killed during the attack.

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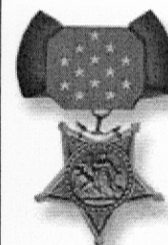
## Biography

McGonagle was born November 19, 1925 in Wichita, Kansas. After attending secondary school and college in California, he enlisted in the Navy in 1944 and for the next three years participated in a Navy training program at the University of Southern California. In June 1947 he accepted a commission into the Navy as an ensign.<sup>[1]</sup> He was assigned to the destroyer

USS *Frank Knox* and after that was posted to the minesweeper

USS *Partridge* from 1947-1950. During the Korean War he served on the minesweeper USS *Kite* during the extensive that earned him and the other members of the crew a Presidential Unit Citation. From 1951

**William Loren McGonagle**

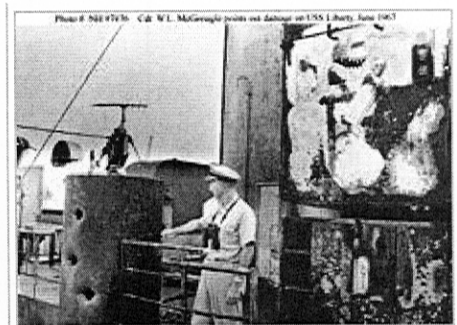


William Loren McGonagle, October 1967, recipient of the Medal of Honor.

<b>Born</b>	November 19, 1925 Wichita, Kansas
<b>Died</b>	March 3, 1999 (aged 73) Palm Springs, California
<b>Place of burial</b>	Arlington National Cemetery
<b>Allegiance</b>	<span><span></span></span> United States of America
<b>Service/branch</b>	<span><span></span></span> United States Navy
<b>Years of service</b>	1944–1974
<b>Rank</b>	Captain
<b>Commands held</b>	USS <i>Liberty</i>  USS <i>Kilauea</i>
<b>Battles/wars</b>	World War II Korean War Six-Day War Vietnam War
<b>Awards</b>	Medal of Honor

to 1966, he was assigned to various positions ashore and afloat, including commands of the fleet tug USS *Mataco* from 1957–1958 and the salvage ship USS *Reclaimer* from 1961–1963.<sup>[1]</sup>

He took command of the *Liberty* in April 1966 and on June 8, 1967 the *Liberty* was attacked while sailing in international waters in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>[1]</sup> The Israeli government claimed the ship was an Egyptian vessel and attacked it with jets, helicopters and motor torpedo boats. McGonagle was severely wounded during the first air attack but remained in command throughout the night and the seventeen hour attack. Although the bridge had sustained heavy damage he stayed and directed the defense of the ship, refusing to leave his post for needed medical attention. As the Israeli fighters continued their attack he maneuvered his ship, directed its defense, supervised the control of flooding and fire, and saw to the care of the casualties. Eventually a United States destroyer arrived to assist and he permitted himself to be removed from the bridge and relinquished command of the *Liberty*.<sup>[2]</sup> The combined air and sea attack killed 34 crew members including naval officers, seamen, two Marines, and a civilian, wounded 171, and severely damaged the ship. Although the ship had a 39 ft (12 m) wide by 24 ft (7.3 m) high hole and a twisted keel, the crew kept the ship afloat, and were able to leave the area under their own power. When the damage to the ship was assessed 821 rocket and machine-gun holes were found in the ship's hull.<sup>[3]</sup>



Cmdr W.M. McGonagle points out damage to the USS *Liberty*.

On March 3, 1999 he died in Palm Springs, California and following services at the Post Chapel at Fort Myer, Virginia. He was buried with full military honors on April 9, 1999 at Arlington National Cemetery with members of his USS *Liberty* crew in attendance. His grave can be found in section 34, lot 208 map grid U/V 11 near the common gravesite of six other members of the USS *Liberty* crew.<sup>[3]</sup>

## Medal of Honor

The Medal of Honor was presented to him at the Washington Navy Yard by the Secretary of the Navy, rather than at the White House by the President.<sup>[4]</sup> After being promoted to captain in October 1967 and recovering from his wounds he was given command of the new ammunition ship USS *Kilauea*. His last command was as the Commanding officer of the NROTC Unit at the University of Oklahoma. He retired from active duty in 1974.<sup>[1]</sup>

### Medal of Honor citation

His Medal of Honor citation (which fails to mention Israel)<sup>[5]</sup> reads:



For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as Commanding Officer, USS *Liberty* (AGTR-5) in the Eastern Mediterranean on 8–9 June 1967. Sailing in international waters, the *Liberty* was attacked without warning by jet fighter aircraft and motor torpedo boats which inflicted many casualties among the crew and caused extreme damage to the ship. Although severely wounded during the first air attack, Captain (then Commander) McGonagle remained at his battle station on the badly damaged bridge and, with full knowledge of the seriousness of his wounds, subordinated his own welfare to the safety and survival of his command. Steadfastly refusing any treatment which would take him



away from his post, he calmly continued to exercise firm command of his ship. Despite continuous exposure to fire, he maneuvered his ship, directed its defense, supervised the control of flooding and fire, and saw to the care of the casualties. Captain McGonagle's extraordinary valor under these conditions inspired the surviving members of the *Liberty's* crew, many of them seriously wounded, to heroic efforts to overcome the battle damage and keep the ship afloat. Subsequent to the attack, although in great pain and weak from the loss of blood, Captain McGonagle remained at his battle station and continued to conn his ship for more than seventeen hours. It was only after rendezvous with a United States destroyer that he relinquished personal control of the *Liberty* and permitted himself to be removed from the bridge. Even then, he refused much needed medical attention until convinced that the seriously wounded among his crew had been treated. Captain McGonagle's superb professionalism, courageous fighting spirit, and valiant leadership saved his ship and many lives. His actions sustain and enhance the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Other honors

A Golden Palm Star on the Palm Springs Walk of Stars was dedicated to McGonagle for Veterans Day in 1999, recognizing him as one of five Medal of Honor recipients from the Southern California desert area.<sup>[6]</sup>

## See also

- List of Medal of Honor recipients

## Notes

- ↑ <sup>*a b c d*</sup> "Captain William L. McGonagle, USN, (1925-1999)". Naval Historical Center. January 14, 2001. <http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/pers-us/uspers-m/w-mcgnl.htm>. Retrieved February 18, 2010.
- ↑ <sup>*a b*</sup> "Medal of Honor recipients". *Vietnam War (M – Z)*. United States Army Center of Military History. June 27, 2011. <http://www.history.army.mil/html/moh/vietnam-m-z.html>. Retrieved February 29, 2012.
- ↑ <sup>*a b*</sup> "William Loren McGonagle, Captain, United States Navy". Arlington National Cemetery profile. <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/wlmcgon.htm>. Retrieved July 23, 2006.
- ↑ Thurber 1999.
- ↑ "Dead in the Water". BBC Four Documentaries. August 21, 2004. <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-3319663041501647311&ei=8N-BS-KPLYrk-Aauj9DQ&q=bbc+uss+liberty#>. Retrieved February 23, 2010.
- ↑ Palm Springs Walk of Stars: By Date Dedicated

## External links and further reading

- "William McGonagle". *Hall of Valor*. Military Times. <http://www.militarytimes.com/citations-medals-awards/recipient.php?recipientid=3339>. Retrieved February 18, 2010.
- Eric Page (March 9, 1999). "William McGonagle, 73, Hero of Israel Attack on the *Liberty*". *The New York Times*. <http://www.mishalov.com/McGonagle.html>. Retrieved July 23, 2006.
- John Crewdson (October 2, 2007). "New revelations in attack on American spy ship". *The Chicago Tribune*. [http://www.chicagotribune.com/services/newspaper/eedition/chi-liberty\\_tuesoct02,0,3794785,full.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/services/newspaper/eedition/chi-liberty_tuesoct02,0,3794785,full.story). Retrieved February 23, 2010.

- "USS *Liberty* Memorial". <http://www.ussliberty.org/>. Retrieved July 23, 2006.
- "USS *Liberty* (AGTR-5), 1964-1970". Naval Historical Center. January 14, 2001. <http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/sh-usn/usnsh-l/agtr5.htm>. Retrieved February 18, 2010.
- "USS *Liberty* (AGTR-5) -- Attack by Israeli forces, 8 June 1967". Naval Historical Center. January 14, 2001. <http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/sh-usn/usnsh-l/agtr5-k.htm>. Retrieved February 18, 2010.
- "Dead in the Water". BBC Four Documentaries. August 21, 2004. <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-3319663041501647311&ei=8N-BS-KPLYrk-Aaujem9DQ&q=bbc+uss+liberty#>. Retrieved February 23, 2010.
- Jon Thurber (March 11, 1999). "Capt. William McGonagle; Won Medal of Honor After Israelis Attacked Ship". *Obituaries* (Los Angeles Times). <http://www.ussliberty.org/latimes.htm>. Retrieved July 23, 2006.
- Cristol, A. Jay (2002). *The Liberty Incident: The 1967 Israeli Attack on the U.S. Navy Spy Ship*. Dulles, Virginia: Brassey's. ISBN 1-57488-414-X. <http://www.thelibertyincident.com>.
- John "J-Cat" Griffith (Apr. 8, 2001). "William L. McGonagle". *Arab-Israeli War Medal of Honor Recipient*. Find a Grave. <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=21178>. Retrieved Nov. 3, 2011.

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Categories: 1925 births | 1999 deaths | USS Liberty incident

| American military personnel of World War II | American military personnel of the Korean War

| American military personnel of the Vietnam War | Burials at Arlington National Cemetery

| Navy Medal of Honor recipients | United States Navy officers

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